

A. Woolbourn
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LETTER

To the Reverend
Mr. STEBBING;

BEING
REMARKS
Upon his late Book
Relating to SINCERITY.

WITH A
POSTSCRIPT

Concerning the
Authority of the Church.

By a CHRISTIAN. 

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A

LETTER

To the Reverend

Mr. STEBBING, &c.

IS a prudent and unexpected *modest* Part in the *Dean*, after the *Double* one he has acted, to call in the Assistance of his Friends on a Subject he's so intirely a Stranger to as *Sincerity*: A thing which he knows one is qualify'd to write well upon by being an *honest* Man, more than being an *able* one. But I wonder any Person or Principle shou'd prevail with *You, Sir*, to engage on *that* Side of a Controversy, which has so little



Reason, and so much *Scandal* to support it. This, I think, is the *Second* Time of Your Appearance in Aid of the learned Committee. But 'tis remarkable, that your Zeal for the Cause has carry'd you *beyond* it: For in your first Task you had nothing to do but to enquire, *Whether Christ were Christ, or the Clergy ; Or whether BOTH Christ and the Clergy were Christ ?* — In the second, the only Question before you was, *Whether the mere Externals of Religion were Religion ?* A Question which one wou'd think might as easily be determin'd as this, *viz.* *Whether the mere Gown and Cassock of the Rector of Rickinghall are the Rector of Rickinghall ?*

But in answer to the many Arguments you have advanced against Religious Sincerity, I'll venture to offer a few in its Behalf ; and to affirm that what I here send you as my Sentiments upon Sincerity have *their own* to recommend 'em. But before I go any farther, I must do you the Justice to observe, that what you sometimes call *Sincerity*, is not properly *Sincerity*, but your own Notion of it ; and that you are often very elaborate in an Argument, not against *the Bishop's* Mistake of the *Truth*, but against *your* Mistake of the *Bishop*. Which is the more to be wonder'd at, when you had his Lordship's Words

Words before you in the 90th Page of his *Preservative*, which are so very *plain* and *express* that one wou'd think you cou'dn't choose but understand 'em in *their own Sense*, and consequently in *his Lordship's*. — He there lays down this Position, *viz.* *That the Favour of God depends upon one's real Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it.* He illustrates this by an Instance; and then immediately after, within the same Paragraph, draws this Conclusion, *viz.* *Therefore the Favour of God follows (i. e. depends upon) Sincerity, consider'd as such, i. e. follows real Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it, consider'd only as Real Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it.* The Convocation and others therefore, by censuring his Lordship for asserting that God's Favour follows *mere Sincerity*, (*i. e. Sincerity consider'd as such,*) censure him for asserting that God's Favour follows *mere Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it.* Hereby they must be understood to assert that God's Favour does *not follow mere Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it.* But if they assert that it does *not follow mere Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it.*

Sincerity, (i. e. Sincerity alone) in the Conduct &c, Then they must mean that it follows something over and above Sincerity in the Conduct of &c; But if they mean that it follows something over and above, that something over and above must either be **RECTITUDE** (of Understanding, Willing, and Acting), or else **INSINCERITY**: If they mean that God's Favour follows Rectitude (of Understanding, &c.) Over and Above Sincerity, They must either mean no more Rectitude (of Understanding, &c.) than all the Rectitude (of Understanding, &c.) a Man can possibly attain to in this World, or else More than All a Man can possibly attain to in this World; if they mean the former, i. e. No more Rectitude than all that can be attain'd to in this World, they must mean One's Understanding, Willing, and Acting sincerely in the Manner one apprehends one ought to understand, to will, and to act, after one's Sincere (which implies one's Utmost) Endeavours to find what that Manner is: Because this is all the Rectitude that can be attain'd to in this World. But now 'tis plain that this Understanding, Willing, and Acting sincerely in the manner one apprehends, one ought to understand, to will and to act, after one's sincere Endeavours to find what that Manner is, is what his Lordship very justly calls *Sincerity in the Conduct of one's*

one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it, i.e. in one Word, Sincerity. Consequently, to say that God's Favour does not follow Sincerity alone, but Sincerity accompany'd with all the Rectitude (of Understanding, Willing, and Acting) which a Man can attain to in this World, is to say that God's Favour does not follow Sincerity alone, but Sincerity accompany'd with Sincerity, i.e. not Sincerity alone, but Sincerity alone. But this you'll say is too absurd a Meaning to be the Committee's. Well then, let us fix upon the other, which is the only one that remains ; namely, that when they say the Favour of God follows Something over and above Sincerity in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's own Actions under it, by [Something over and above] they mean More Rectitude (of Understanding, Willing and Acting) than barely the Utmost Rectitude which one can attain to in this World ; But if they mean this, they mean to make one's procuring the Favour of God depend upon one's attaining to that in this World, which it's impossible for one to attain to in this World ; and so to make one's procuring the Favour of God depend upon an Impossibility of one's procuring the Favour of God. The former Meaning was bad enough

enough by being *absurd*; this is worse, by being both *impious* and *absurd* too.

Those therefore who say the Favour of God does not follow *mere Sincerity* in the Conduct of one's Conscience and of one's own Actions under it; but that it follows such a Sincerity *accompany'd with something else*; can't mean, *consistently with good Sense*, that it follows such a Sincerity, accompany'd with all the Rectitude (of Understanding, Willing, and Acting) which *Man* is capable of attaining to in *this World*, because that's meaning by Sincerity *and something else*, Sincerity *and nothing else*. Nor can they mean *consistently either with good Sense or Piety*, that it follows such a Sincerity accompany'd with *more than all the Rectitude* (of Understanding, &c.) which *Man* is capable of attaining to in *this World*; but if they mean *neither* of these, they *must* mean what's *more absurd* and *more impious* than either of 'em, i. e. They must mean that the Favour of God does not follow Sincerity, *unless it be accompany'd with INSINCERITY*. Which makes *Insincerity* necessary to Salvation as well as Sincerity. —— Thus, Sir, I've made it appear, that to distinguish in this Case between *Sincerity* and *mere Sincerity*, is a Distinction that proves nothing, but the

Weak-

Weakness or Wickedness of such as make use of it. They might as reasonably tell us, that the Favour of God follows Christianity, but not *mere Christianity*, as that it follows Sincerity, but not *mere Sincerity* (in the Conduct of one's Conscience, and of one's Actions under it).

Thus much I have ventur'd to advance in opposition to *The Church*: To advance more, wou'd be to exceed the Province of one who is answering, not *them*, but Mr. Stebbing; not opposing *the Committee*, but *his manner of defending 'em*. And therefore now I proceed to his sagacious Remarks.

I begin with observing, that in the second Page of 'em, you are so full of your *Metaphysicks*, as to forget your *Logick*: For, what you say of Sincerity's having *no Degrees*, Language it self convinces us can be only true of Sincerity in the *Abstract*: not in the *Concrete*. For Instance; a Man who uses *all* the best means he can to be rightly inform'd in his Judgment, and Acts according to that Judgment, is a Man who's *perfectly sincere*: Well, then he who uses not *all*, but *almost all* the best Means to be rightly inform'd &c, is *not* perfectly sincere: but I wou'd ask, May not *he* properly be said to be *more sincere* than the Person who uses *fewer* of these Means? He may certainly, with good Pro-

B priety,

priety, be said to be *more sincere* than such a Person ; And why ? only because his Conduct approaches nearer to a perfectly *sincere* Conduct than such a Person's. Thus when one Man is said to be a *better* Man than another, the Meaning is only this, That he is *less wicked* than another : For, properly speaking, no Man is *good*, but he who has *perfectly*, who has *quite*, fulfill'd *all* the Precepts in the Gospel ; But he who is here said to be a *better* Man than the other, can't properly be said to have *more perfectly*, *more quite*, fulfill'd *all* the Precepts of the Gospel, than another, because this is *absurd* : and therefore *this* can't be the Reason of his being call'd a *Better* Man ; but if *this* be not the Reason, the Reason *must* be because he has fulfill'd *more* Precepts of the Gospel than the other, or done *more* than the other *towards* fulfilling *all* the Precepts of the Gospel. For the same Reason then that one Man may be call'd a *better* Man than another consistently with Propriety of Speech ; one Man may be call'd a *more sincere* Man than another, consistently with Propriety of Speech. And you know too that it *is* and *must* be the Common Way of Speaking, to say that such *Christians*, or such a *Religion*, are *better Christians*, or a *better Religion*, than such and such. And this, I hope, you'll grant,

grant, is talking *Intelligibly*; if it is *not*, you your self in many Pages are *Unintelligible*; but if it *is*, then in this particular Page I'm upon, you are very *impertinent*; inasmuch as you are writing without any Reason, not against *the Bishop*, but against *Language it self*.

Page 4. Here, Sir, I must tell you, that when you speak of the **BEST** and the **WORST** Communion, you make a very bad Use of those Two Terms, **BEST** and **WORST**. Certainly that Man joins with the *Best* Communion, i. e. with the *Only* Communion he *ought* to join with, who joins with *that* which in the *Sincerity* of his Heart he *BELIEVES* to be the *Only* Communion he *ought* to join with: be that Communion what it will, as to *that* Goodness of it which is known *Only to God*, i. e. as to what you call its *Intrinsic* Goodness.

Page 9. The *Foreign*, *Out of the Way*, *improper* Sense, wherein *you*, and *the Dean*, and the *Committee* use and apply these Two Words, is again remarkable in *this* Page, and is the Foundation of a Thousand false Reasonings in the Controversy. His Lordship is charg'd by you All with Maintaining, that in chusing a Communion, *Every Man's own private Judgment* will justify him in the **WORST**

Choice he can make ; whereas his Lordship's constant Doctrine is that, It will only justify him in the BEST Choice he can make : i. e. when a Man makes Choice of such a Communion, as he sincerely judges to be the Best Communion he can choose, the Sincerity of his Judgment will justify him in such a Choice.

But, it seems, the *judicious Committee, and the Dean, and You, distinguish between that which is the Best Choice in it self, and that which a Man's own Judgment faithfully proposes to him, as the Best.* This indeed is a Distinction that I very much wonder at, especially in the Mouth of *the Committee.* For, pray, has a Man any thing to inform him, *Which* is the **BEST** Choice **I N I T S E L F**, *Which* is the **BEST** and **MOST ELIGIBLE Communion**, but *his own Judgment* ; and must not that be *Deem'd the BEST Communion I N I T S E L F*, which, the *Only* thing that **CAN** inform him *which Communion is the Best in it self*, **DOES** inform him *is the Best in it self* ?

In *Page 18 and 19.* You shew your self as great a Stranger to *Reason*, as in other Places to *Religion*. Here you have Two Adversaries to contend with ; the *Bishop*, and *Demonstration* : You undertake to overcome *Both* :

Quid dignum tanto feret hic Promissor hiatu?
If

If all you advance in p. 19 were true, what wou'd the Truth of it avail you? What Good cou'd it do your own Cause; or what Harm to the Bishop's? But that it is not such an Argument as you design'd it for, is plain. For, in the Notion of the Nonjurors, Mr. Nelson SINS by the very Act of Communicating OUT OF THE NONJUROR'S CHURCH; which is a Circumstance that you seem to have forgot in p. 19; For there the Man who is suppos'd to SIN when he acts according to an Erroneous Conscience, does not sin BY acting according to his Conscience; no; but by first Contracting, and afterwards Continuing in, an Erroneous Conscience, by means of not using due Endeavours Before he had it, to Prevent his having it; and when he had it, to Remove it. So that all the Guilt he has by means of his erroneous Conscience, is Antecedent to, and entirely Independent on, His acting according to it. For suppose he did NOT act according to it; wou'd his erroneous Conscience become less erroneous in its Dictates, by his Not acting according to its Dictates; wou'd his Guilt of one kind be diminish'd by his adding Guilt to it of another kind? Is not acting against one's Conscience, As acting so, a SIN? You own it is: Why then, acting even against an ERRONEOUS Con-

Conscience is a SIN, and *as great* a Sin as if it were *not* an erroneous one. But if to act *against* it be a SIN, then to act *according* to it is No Sin: For of Two Contradicories *Both* cannot be *affirm'd* of the *same thing*, and in the *same respect*. And therefore you are mightily out if you bring *this* as a parallel Case to that which His Lordship was speaking of; because His Lordship's puts a Man under a *Necessity of Sinning* (and, as I apprehend it, of sinning in an *equal Degree*) *both Ways*; *This does not*. So that in this Place you are rather *attempting* to argue, than *arguing*, against the Bishop. And here the World have a Character, either of *your Cause*, or of *your own Defence of it*, when they meet with *so little Argument*, in a Place where you affect *the Most*. Here it is you oppose *Demonstration* by what *you* take to be *Demonstration*. But are *the Bishop's Demonstration* and *yours ALIKE*, when *yours* is deficient in the *Main Thing* which shou'd make 'em alike? Your Book indeed *abounds* with *such Demonstrations*, which demonstrate nothing that I know of but their *Own Weakness*, and *His* who makes use of 'em.

Tho' Mr. Nelson's Conscience were *erroneous*, and that Error contracted by *his own Fault*; that wou'd make *no Difference* which

which cou'd affect the Bishop's Argument. And therefore you don't shew *any* thing amiss in His Lordship's *Demonstration*, but *a great deal* in your own *Apprehension of it*, when you say he has left the main Thing to be *suppos'd*, which gives *Force* to his Reasoning. Mr. Nelson, according to the *Nonjurors*, is cast out of God's Favour, not *for acting according to his Conscience* by Communicating with our Church, but *for Communicating with our Church* : This, according to them, and this *alone*, casts him out of God's Favour *ipso facto*, let his Conscience be *Erroneous* or not *Erroneous*, and *let him come by that Conscience how he will*. 'Tis enough to the Purpose of His Lordship's Argument, for it to be suppos'd that He acted *according to his Conscience* by doing *as he did*; and consequently that he had *Resisted* his Conscience if he had done *otherwise*; and *by Resisting his Conscience*, had even in the Opinion of the Nonjurors *themselves*, been *cast out of God's Favour* : So, according to the Nonjurors, Mr. Nelson had been *cast out of God's Favour*, By doing what, according to the Nonjurors, is the Condition of *Not being cast out of God's Favour*. This, Sir, is what I take to be *manifestly* the Sense of his Lordship's Argument; an Argument which it's easier to *say* you can

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answer, than *to answer*. 'Tis Demonstration it self ; 'tis the best Sort of Demonstration : And this I'll venture to be sure of ; that neither *All you have said*, nor *All you can say*, nor *All that the Dean, or THE COMMITTEE can say*, will ever be able to Overthrow it.

Now, Sir, I've consider'd *All* your Arguments, and given such an Answer to the Best of 'em as they deserve : But had almost overlook'd a Passage in page 4. of your Book, which you'd be very angry at me for taking no Notice of. There you reflect upon Two Persons ; EUCLID and THE BISHOP : Upon EUCLID, by telling us that *He* never *Demonstrated* any thing better than *You* have done : Upon THE BISHOP, by making Him write against *All Communions*. But whence do you prove *this* ? Why, You tell us THE BISHOP makes *All Communions alike with respect to Salvation* : THEREFORE with respect to Salvation, *All Church-Communion* (according to his Lordship, say You) is *Unnecessary*. A notable Argument indeed ! I beg the Reader wou'd attend to it :
 " The Bishop, says Mr. Stebbing, makes
 " ALL Communions *alike* with respect
 " to Salvation ; THEREFORE he makes
 " ALL Communions and No Communi-
 " on *alike* with respect to Salvation. He
 " writes

" writes FOR All Communions, THERE-
 " FORE he writes AGAINST 'em All. His
 " Lordship is for ALL Religions, THERE-
 " FORE he's *Against* RELIGION. He's
 " for SINCERITY in Choice, THEREFORE
 " *Against* CHOICE". Such are the Conclu-
 sions of Mr. Stebbing. There are many more
 of the same kind in your Book, if I had Time,
 Room, and Patience to take Notice of 'em.

And is *this* the Argument you boast
 of? An Argument which you shew as
 much *Weakness* in *advancing*, as you do
Confidence in calling it *Demonstration*.

I can't chuse but observe that the *Ignorance* of Some, and the *Impertinence* of
 Others, have each of 'em a Share in the
Controversy upon Sincerity. Without this
 Observation, one cou'd not be able to
 account for the Pains which are taken
 by the Bishop's Opponents to shew that
 there is such a Thing in Nature as *Sincere*
Sinning; and that they are much better
 Acquainted with *This*, than with any Other
 Sincerity. One of 'em seems to have a
 good Notion of *Sincere Murder*. Another
 to have an excellent one of *Sincere Adul-*
tery. A Third speaks of *Sincere Infincer-*
ty. The *Nonjuror* Mr. Law's Belief is,
 that one may *Deny the Being of a God*
 with a *sincere Mind*: And even Dr. Sher-
 lock himself thinks a Man may *reject Je-*

sus Christ VERY SINCERELY. Whilst they make such a *Mock* of RELIGION (for such they know is *Real Sincerity*), I imagine 'em to be in a *merry* Mood rather than in a *thinking* one. But You, Sir, seem to be *serious* upon this Head; and to cloath *their* Language with *Your own Gravity*; hinting that You verily believe there *are* such Creatures in the World as *Sincere Atheists, Sincere Hypocrites, Sincere Dr. SHERLOCKS*. Now, whether You are not very *wrong* in this Belief, is a Question which it's *only* the Busines of *every Man's Common Reason*, Not of *Me*, to determine. For in defending the Doctrine of the Bishop, I am not oblig'd to answer *every* thing that Mr. *Stebbing* advances; but only every thing he advances *which affects the Doctrine of the Bishop*: And the Doctrine of the Bishop, that sincere *Christians* will have the Favour of God, is *not at all* affected by an Enquiry whether sincere *Atheists &c* will have the Favour of God. There's a great Difference between a sincere *Christian*, and a sincere *Man*; and consequently a Difference between asserting that God's Favour follows *Sincerity, as such*, when the Person who asserts it *manifestly addresses himself to Christians IN PARTICULAR*; and asserting it, when he ad-

addresses himself to *All Men UNIVERSAL-
LY.* His Lordship (as appears, not only
from the *Title Page* of his Book, but from
his *Book*,) was speaking, *manifestly*, to
Christians as *Christians* (and of no other
than *Gospel-Sincerity*). Now, how any
Man can be a *Sincere CHRISTIAN*, and
at the same time a *Sincere REJECTOR of
Jesus Christ*; or how His Lordship, by
asserting that God's Favour attends *one*
of 'em, can be understood to assert that
it attends *both* of 'em; are Difficulties I
leave the *Dean* to contend with.

His Lordship's Subject was Sincerity *in* the Manner of Religion &c; Sincerity, I mean, in the *Choice* of that Manner; and in the *Pursuit* of it, when chosen. And he may more properly be said to shew himself a Friend to *All* Communions, than to *None* of 'em, by arguing that God's Favour is *sure* to attend *Sincerity* in *ANY* of 'em.

You very well know, Sir, that the Things His Lordship's Doctrine aims to advance, are *The Essence and Purity* of Divine Worship, of Religion &c; that the Things it opposes, are *The Incroachments on The Essence and Purity* of Divine Worship, of Religion &c. This, You very well know too, does not only *seem* to be,

but *must* be the Sense of that abus'd Passage in his Lordship's Sermon, P.20. Which I wish I could rather believe the Committee, and Dr. *Sherlock* particularly, guilty of *Misunderstanding* than of *Misrepresenting*. That Passage shews the Scope of the whole Sermon, and runs thus— ' 1. If ' the very Essence of God's Worship be ' Spirit and Truth. 2. If Religion be ' Virtue and Charity under &c. 3. If ' true real Faith can't be the Effect of ' Force — Then, in Any of these Cases, ' To apply Force, is to Act contrary to ' the Interests of True Religion.' — In Any of these Cases, *i. e.* In Case of God's Worship, In Case of Religion &c. To apply such Methods of advancing God's Worship, of advancing Religion, as are destructive of what God's Worship (*i. e.* God's *Real* Worship) consists in, *viz.* Spirit and Truth ; Of what Religion, (*i. e.* *Real* Religion) consists in, *i. e.* Virtue and Charity &c ; Is to apply such Methods of advancing God's Worship, as are *Destructive* of God's Worship (properly so call'd) ; such Methods of advancing Religion, as are *Destructive* of Religion, (properly so call'd :) Consequently such Divine Worship, or such Religion as is *so* advanced, is *Merely Nominal* Divine Worship,

Worship, *Merely Nominal Religion*, i. e.
No Divine Worship, No Religion.

Is this, Sir, to put the Worship of God and the Neglect of it, on the same footing? Thus Religion's and the Bishop's Adversaries, wou'd induce the Ignorant to believe. But sure 'tis one thing to argue against Inforcing *the Worship of God*, Another thing to argue against Inforcing *this or that particular way of Worshipping him*, and no other; For it's no Consequence, that Because I'm not oblig'd to Worship God *this way*, Therefore I'm not oblig'd to Worship him *Any way*. The Bishop argues against *Nominal, merely Nominal, Divine Worship*: Which is arguing Consequentially, *even in that very place, For REAL Divine Worship, i. e. for Divine Worship*; unless it can be prov'd, that arguing against such Methods of Advancing God's Worship, as are destructive of the very Essence of God's Worship, is Arguing against God's Worship.

I ask *You* now once more: *You, Sir, Because You are become the Tool of the Committee, in a Cause which they themselves are as much *asham'd*, as afraid to defend*; I ask *You, I say, How the Bishop can be said to Discountenance the Worship of God?* But before You give an Answer,
 Sir,

Sir, Let me desire You to remember, that To Discountenance the Worship of God, is To Discountenance *All* Ways of Worshipping God, and that to Discountenance *All* Ways of Worshipping Him, is To Countenance *No* Way of Worshipping Him : But to Discountenance *only such* Ways of Worshipping God, as have *not the Essence* of God's Worship, is Countenancing *All BUT SUCH*; and consequently Countenancing All that *ought to be* Countenanced. If therefore it Countenances All Ways of Worshipping God that *Ought* to be Countenanced, and by Countenancing All those Is far from Discountenancing *All*, and yet must Discountenance *All* Before It can Countenance the *Neglect* of God's Worship : It follows, that It's far from Countenancing the *Neglect* of God's Worship : even so far from it, that It *Discountenances* that and *only* that : For, as I have shewn already, It Discountenances the substituting of *any* thing which has not the Essence of God's Worship in the Place of God's Worship, and calling it by that *Name* ; And certainly as far as Any thing which has *not the Essence* of God's Worship, is Substituted in the place of God's Worship, and call'd by that *Name*, so far God's Worship is *Neglected* : And this indeed is the *Wickedest kind* of Neglect ; For,

For, in Fact, 'tis a *Neglect* of Divine Worship, and an *Abuse* of it at the same time.

Since therefore the Bishop's Doctrine does not Countenance *the Neglect* of God's Worship, But on the contrary, Countenances *God's Worship*; And since, in order to put *Both* these on an Equal Footing, It ought to Countenance, and *equally* to Countenance *Both*; The Consequence is, That It does *not* put *God's Worship* and *the Neglect of it*, on an equal Footing.

Indeed His Lordship's Doctrine *does* put *Real* Divine Worship, and THE NEGLECT of *mere Nominal* Divine Worship, *i. e.* The Neglect of what is directly *contrary* to *Real* Divine Worship on the same Footing. But it does not follow, that Therefore it puts *Real* Divine Worship and the Neglect of *Real* Divine Worship on the same Footing; Unless it can be prov'd, that *Real* Divine Worship and *merely Nominal* Divine Worship, are One and the same thing, *i. e.* that Both what is *Real* Divine Worship, and what is *not Real* Divine Worship, are *Real* Divine Worship.

In short, the Bishop argues for what's of no Less Consequence to Divine Worship than the *very Essence* of it, Spirit and Truth; But by thus arguing for the Essence of it, *does not, cannot* mean to oppose every thing that's *Not* the Essence of it,

i. e.

i. e. All the *Necessary Externals* of Religion. No; You are sensible He wou'd have the Externals of Religion to prevail, *as Externals*; but not *as Religion*.

With what *Reason* now, with what *Conscience*, with what *Modesty*, can the Committee, and Dr: *Sherlock* particularly, charge his Lordship, and charge him in those very Writings of theirs, wherein *they* put God's Worship and the Neglect of it on the same Footing, with putting God's Worship and the Neglect of it on the same Footing? Or with what new *Evasion* can *You*, Sir, with all your *Sophistry*, justify 'em in such a Charge? *The Devil* himself could not assert, that the Bishop has put Divine Worship and the Neglect of it, on the same footing *expressly*; *The Committee*, I hope, will no longer assert, that he has done it *Consequentially*.

I conclude with being sorry, that You should handle the Bishop and Sincerity in such a manner: and that You shou'd attempt to establish Your *Reputation* on the Ruins of Your *Religion*. But alas! Men are got into a Principle that inclines 'em to *oppose* things, not because they are *False*, But because they are *Unpopular*. And whilst they have so much *Selfishness* as to be only promoting *their own Cause*, They have

have so little *Modesty* as to call it *the Church's*: tho' at the same time if the Church's and the Truth's had FEWER Enemies; *The Bishop's* they are sensible wou'd have FEWER, and *Their own MORE.*

I cannot close, Sir, without doing You one piece of Justice. It must be confess'd indeed that You have written so well *on the Wrong Side* of the Question, as to make the World think You cou'd write better *on the Right one.*

And, I must say this too of Your worthy Patron the Dean, (which I believe every Body will easily concur in) that Tho' His *Prejudices* and *Passions* are on the Committee's Side, His *Good Sense* is on the Bishop's. I subscribe my self

As a Friend to the Rights of Christians,
PHILO-CHRISTIANUS.



POSTSCRIPT.

WHAT I write to You *at present*, You see I write, as *a Christian*: You shall soon hear from me in the Quality of *a Man*; at which Time I shall carefully weigh every thing advanced in His Lordship's Sermon *against Absolute Authority*; every thing advanced by His Lordship's

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Enemies in Favour of it ; Shall examine the Bishop's Answer to the Committee ; shall examine Mr. Stebbing's Answer to the Bishop : Shall shew that *the Dean* has contradicted *the Rector* ; shall shew that *the Rector* has contradicted *Himself* : In short, shall consider *All* Matters relating to AUTHORITY ; shall reconsider *some* Matters relating to SINCERITY : Shall prove that *the Church* may have *the Church's* Right, without having *Christ's* ; that *the People* may have *the People's* Right, without having *the Church's* : Shall closely pursue You, Sir, through all your Turnings and Windings ; and shall, I hope, not only *endeavour* to Demonstrate, but Demonstrate, that the Bishop's Doctrines subvert *no* Government or Discipline in the Church of Christ : but that they *do*, and ought to subvert *All* Government and Discipline in the Church of *the Devil*.

These, Sir, are some Sketches of what I design in Answer to Your *First* Treatise when I have Leisure to answer it *Disjunctim* : In the mean Time, My Answer to it *Conjunctim*, is briefly this ;

That the Bishop has deny'd to the Church only an *Absolute Authority* Has not determin'd whether the Church can have any Authority remaining to it, abstracted from that which he has deny'd to it as an *Absolute Authority*

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Cannot therefore be charg'd with denying to it *All Authority EXPRESSLY* ;
 Cannot be charg'd with denying to it
All Authority CONSEQUENTIALLY,
 unless *Absolute Authority* implies *All Authority* ;

If *Absolute Authority* implies *All Authority*, Then *the Committee themselves* must labour under *as bad a Charge* as *the Bishop*, or *a worse* : For either *they themselves* deny *ABSOLUTE Authority*, or they do not ; If they *do*, then *they themselves*, as well as *the Bishop*, deny *All Authority* to the Church (because *Absolute Authority* is *suppos'd* to be *All Authority*) ; But if they *do not*, Then where is *the Bishop's IMPERTINENCE* in preaching such a *Doctrine* as he did ? Or *Their VERACITY* in denying that it's applicable to *Themselves* ?



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